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the property of Mr. John F. Eliot, and formerly belonging to his kinsman, the late Rev. Andrew Eliot, D.D. Also prints of Generals Arnold and Putnam.

J. LOTHROP MOTLEY, Esq., of Boston, was chosen a Resident Member, *vice* Samuel Eliot, removed from the State.

Professor SAMUEL ELIOT, of Hartford, in the State of Connecticut, and late a Resident Member, was elected a Corresponding Member.

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#### NOVEMBER MEETING.

The Society held their stated monthly meeting on Thursday, Nov. 13, at noon, at their rooms in Tremont Street, Boston; the President, Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, in the chair.

The Librarian announced donations from the Smithsonian Institution; the Congress of the United States; the Department of State of the United States; the State Historical Society of Wisconsin; Yale College; Henry A. Whitney, Esq., of Boston; Hon. John R. Bartlett, of Providence, R.I.; John W. Barber, Esq., of New Haven; Mrs. Mary M. Dyer, of Enfield, N.H.; Mr. Isaac Hersey, of Abington; John Appleton, M.D.; J. Dean, Esq.; Rev. Caleb D. Bradlee; and J. H. Mitchell, Esq.; and from Messrs. Ames, Winthrop, and Worcester, of this Society.

The Corresponding Secretary communicated letters of acceptance from Messrs. Motley and Eliot; also a



*Thomas Dowe*

letter from Hon. John R. Bartlett, communicating his gift of a copy of the Colonial Records of Rhode Island.

The President then made the following communication: —

It is already well known to the members of this Society, that the venerable THOMAS DOWSE, to whose munificence we have so recently been indebted for a very large and valuable addition to our library, has passed away since our last stated meeting. He died on Tuesday, the 4th of November, at about eleven o'clock, A.M., at the age of eighty-four years, and was buried on the following Thursday. The interval between the time at which information of his death was received and the time fixed for his interment was not sufficient to allow of any formal meeting of the Society, and the responsibility was assumed by the President of notifying the members to attend the funeral without further ceremony. The result was all that could have been desired. A very large proportion of such of our number as live within reach of so short a notice assembled at the mansion of the deceased at the appointed time, and, after attending the religious services of the occasion, accompanied his relatives and friends to Mount Auburn. Gathered there, between the imposing shaft which Mr. Dowse had recently erected at his own expense to the memory of FRANKLIN and the humbler stone which he had prepared to designate his own tomb, the officers and members of our Society united in paying the last tribute of respect and gratitude to his remains.

It has seemed fit that an official announcement of these circumstances should be made at this our earliest meeting since they occurred, in order that it may find its appropriate place upon our records, and that such further measures may be adopted in honor of the memory of our largest benefactor as may commend themselves to the deliberate sense of the members.

The event which has indissolubly connected the name of Thomas Dowse with the Massachusetts Historical Society has occurred too recently to require any detailed recital. The formal presentation of the rich and costly library, which it had been the pleasure and the pride of his whole mature lifetime to collect, was made known to us on the fifth day of August last; and the circumstances of that occasion are still fresh in the remembrance of us all.

Though he had long been suffering more or less acutely from the disease which has at length brought his remarkable and honorable career to a close, Mr. Dowse was still, at that time, in perfect possession of his faculties, and took the deepest and most intelligent interest in all the details of the transaction. At his own request, I called upon him repeatedly after the gift was consummated, and was a witness of the satisfaction and pleasure which he experienced in having secured what he was pleased to regard as so trustworthy and so distinguished a guardianship for his most cherished treasures. He seemed to feel that the great object of his life had at length been happily provided for, and that he was now ready to be released from the burdens of the flesh. It cannot be doubted that the gratification afforded him, both by the act itself and by the manner in which it was accepted and acknowledged, did much at once to prolong his life beyond his own expectation or that of his friends, and to impart comfort and serenity to his last days.

He lived long enough, after every thing had been arranged, to lend a modest but cordial assent and co-operation to the fulfilment of the proposal which accompanied our acceptance of his munificent donation; and a noble portrait of him is here with us to-day to adorn the room in which his library shall be ultimately placed. The books themselves, with the single exception of the memorable volume which he delivered into my hands as an earnest of the gift, were left to the last to be the solace of his own closing scene.

It is for others, who have known him longer and better than myself, to do justice to the many striking qualities of head and heart which characterized this remarkable self-made man, and to give due illustration to a career and an example which must ever be freshly honored, not by this Society only, but by all who take an interest in the advancement of literature, learning, and the arts.

It would hardly be excused if these opening remarks were brought to a conclusion this morning without an allusion, in a single word, to another dispensation of Divine Providence, which has come home even nearer to these halls, since our last monthly meeting. I need hardly say that I refer to the death of our late esteemed and distinguished associate, the Honorable Samuel Hoar, of Concord, which occurred on Sunday morning, the 2d inst. There are those here better entitled than myself to deal with the character and services of this excellent and eminent son of Middlesex. His familiar and welcome presence at our meetings will be missed by us all ; for he was among our most punctual members. And it may justly be said of him, that few men have been connected with this Society, or with any other society, who will have left upon the historic page of Massachusetts a purer and brighter example of that firm and inflexible integrity, and of that persevering devotion to every personal obligation and every professional or public duty, which are the crowning glories of a Christian life.

The President then stated that the meeting was open for such suggestions as might be thought appropriate to the occasion ; whereupon Hon. EDWARD EVERETT addressed the Chair substantially as follows :—

The event to which you have alluded, Mr. President, in such feeling and appropriate terms, calls upon the Historical Society to perform the last duty of respect and gratitude to our most distinguished benefactor, as you have justly called him.

Since we last met in this place, he has paid the great debt of nature ; and it now devolves upon us to pay the last debt to his memory by placing upon our records a final and emphatic expression of the deep sense we entertain of the excellent qualities of his character, the liberality and refinement of his pursuits, and especially of the munificence and public spirit evinced in the disposal of his library. You have already, Mr. President, said all that the occasion requires ; and I am not without fear that I may seem to overstep the limits of propriety in doing more than lay upon your table the resolution which I hold in my hand. I have so recently spoken to you on the subject of Mr. Dowse, that I may seem to monopolize that pleasing office to which so many gentlemen present are fully competent to do justice. But it is many years — an entire generation — since my acquaintance and my friendly relations with him began. I saw the progress of his library, not certainly from its commencement, for that took place sixty years ago (he told me himself that he devoted his first earnings to the purchase of books), but from a time when it had not reached half its present size. In earlier life I passed many happy, perhaps I may venture to say profitable, hours in it, consulting choice volumes not elsewhere accessible to me at that time ; and I cannot repress the desire, before this occasion is swept down the current of human affairs, to dwell a moment on the recollection.

But I will not take up again the train of remark which occupied our thoughts when the Society was called together on the 5th of August. I shall ever look back to that meeting, at which Mr. Dowse's intention to bestow his library upon the Historical Society was announced to us, as one of the interesting occasions of my life. This collection had for at least sixty years been in progress of formation. For half that period, its value had been known to the public. Mr. Dowse's personal career and history awakened interest. There was an approach to romance in the manner in which he acquired his

beautiful gallery of paintings. His persistence in increasing his library, the uncommonly select character of his books, — these were circumstances, which at least, for a quarter of a century, had given his library a certain celebrity. It was an object of curiosity. It was justly deemed a privilege to have access to it. Strangers were taken to see it; and the inquiry, “What will Mr. Dowse, being childless, do with his library?” had, I imagine, passed through the mind of most persons who knew its value. But, amidst all the conjectures as to the mode in which it would be disposed of, I presume that it never occurred to any one that he would dispossess himself of it while he lived. If ever there was a “ruling passion,” it actuated him in reference to his books; it led him, impelled him, to devote his spare time, his thoughts, his means, to the formation of his library; and in obedience to that law of our nature, by which, according to poets and moralists, —

“We feel the ruling passion strong in death,”

no one, I presume, ever thought for a moment, that Mr. Dowse, while he lived, would divest himself of his property in his library. No one doubted that he would cling to that, with a pardonable intellectual avarice, with his dying grasp; and that, when he was gone, it would perhaps be told of him, that he had exclaimed in his last moments, —

“‘Not that; I cannot part with that!’ and died.”

But Mr. Dowse felt and acted otherwise. Endowed in many respects with superior energy of character and firmness of purpose, we beheld him in the course of the last summer, his bodily strength indeed failing, but in the full enjoyment of his mental powers, calmly divesting himself of the ownership of this much-loved library, — the great work of his life, the scene of all his enjoyments, — and placing it, without reserve, under the control of others. He had reason, no doubt, sir, as you have intimated, to feel confident, that, while he lived, the delicacy and gratitude of the Society would leave it in his



undisturbed possession. But he made no stipulation to that effect: he gave it in absolute and immediate ownership to the Society.

But I believe, sir, our friend and benefactor reaped, even during the short remainder of his life, the reward of this noble effort. I had the privilege of an interview with him a few days after the donation was consummated; and my own observation confirmed the testimony of our much-valued associate, Mr. Livermore, who saw him daily, and your own impression, that he seemed to find relief, to derive strength, from the completion of this arrangement, and that, in a state of health in which continued existence hangs upon a thread, it had very possibly added some weeks of tranquil satisfaction to his life. I have not seen him for years in a happier frame of mind than he appeared to me that day.

I availed myself of the favorable moment respectfully to urge upon him a compliance with the request of the Society, to which you, sir, have alluded, expressed in one of the resolutions of the 5th of August, that he would sit for his portrait. I recommended to him strongly the highly promising youthful artist, Mr. Wight, for whom I had had the pleasure, a few years ago, of procuring an opportunity to paint the portrait of the illustrious Humboldt. Mr. Dowse consented with the hesitation inspired by his characteristic diffidence and humility; and the result does the highest credit to Mr. Wight's artistic skill and taste. He has produced an admirable portrait of our friend and benefactor; and it is certainly a pleasing coincidence, that there is a resemblance approaching to family likeness between this portrait and that of the Baron Humboldt.

And so, Mr. President, his work on earth being accomplished, calmly and without hurry or perturbation even at the last; that industrious and thoughtful existence divided equally between active labor and liberal intellectual culture; lonely as the world accounts solitude, but passed in the glorious com-

pany of the great and wise of all ages and countries, who live an earthly immortality in their writings ; a stranger at all times to the harassing agitations of public life ; undisturbed by the political earthquake which that day shook the country, — our friend and benefactor, on the 4th instant, passed gently away. As I saw him two days afterwards, lying just within the threshold which I had never passed before but to meet his cordial welcome ; as I gazed upon the lifeless but placid features, white as the camellias with which surviving affection had decked his coffin ; as I accompanied him to his last abode on earth, — the “ new sepulchre ” (if without irreverence I may use the words) which he had prepared for himself, “ wherein was never man yet laid ; ” as I saw him borne into that quiet dwelling where the weary are at rest, within the shadow of the monument to Franklin to which you have alluded, lately erected at his sole expense and care on the higher ground which overlooks his own tomb, that even in death he might sleep at his great master’s feet ; as, in company with you all, gathered bareheaded round his grave at Mount Auburn at that bright autumnal noon, while the falling leaves and naked branches and sighing winds of November announced the dying year, I listened to the sublime utterances of the funeral service breathed over his dust, I felt that such a closing scene of such a life came as near as human frailty permits to fill the measure of a hopeful euthanasy. I ask leave, sir, to offer the following resolutions : —

Whereas it has pleased Divine Providence to remove from this life, in a serene old age, Mr. Thomas Dowse, of Cambridge, the largest benefactor of the Massachusetts Historical Society, —

*Resolved*, That the Members of the Society, filled with gratitude at the recollection of his late munificent donation, desire to renew, on this occasion, the expression of their deep sense of obligation for that most important addition to their library, and their thankfulness for so distinguished a proof of the confidence of Mr. Dowse in the character and stability of the Society.

*Resolved*, That the Members of the Historical Society contemplate with peculiar satisfaction the example set by their late honored and lamented benefactor, of a long life devoted with singular steadiness to a course of intelligent, liberal, and successful self-culture, in the hours of leisure and repose from the labors of an active occupation, and closed by a noble act of public spirit and thoughtful care, to render his precious literary accumulations available for the benefit of the community.

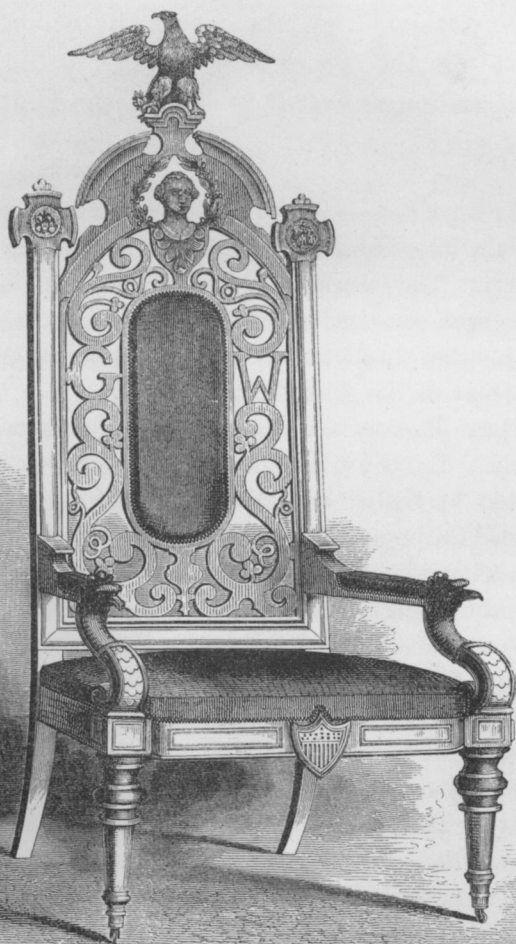
*Resolved*, That a Committee of — be appointed by the Chair to prepare for the Records of the Society such a commemorative notice of Mr. Dowse as shall do justice to the feelings of gratitude and respect which the Members of the Society unanimously cherish for his memory.

These resolutions, having been seconded, were unanimously passed. The blank in the last resolution was filled with "one;" and Mr. Everett was appointed by the Chair to prepare a Memoir of Mr. Dowse, in conformity with the resolution.

The resolutions in relation to Mr. Dowse having thus been disposed of, Governor WASHBURN rose, and, after a few appropriate remarks, offered the following resolution: —

*Resolved*, That this Society have learned with deep regret the death of their late-respected associate, the Hon. Samuel Hoar; and that Hon. William Minot, his classmate, be requested to prepare the customary Memoir for our Collections.

The resolution was seconded and sustained, in brief tributes to the character of Mr. Hoar, by Hon. JAMES SAVAGE and Hon. DANIEL A. WHITE, the latter of whom spoke of himself as having been a tutor of Mr. Hoar at Harvard College, and of having thus known him from his youth upwards.



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The resolution was unanimously adopted.

The President communicated the following letter from Benjamin R. Winthrop, Esq., of New York, accompanying the gift of a chair, beautifully wrought "of timber taken from the house in which Washington dwelt" (in the city of New York) "at the period of his inauguration as first President of the United States."

NEW YORK, October 14, 1856.

MY DEAR SIR, — I have this day forwarded to your address a chair intended as a gift to the Massachusetts Historical Society. The inscription which it bears will inform you that it has been constructed of timber taken from the house in which Washington dwelt at the period of his inauguration as first President of the United States.

You will excuse me for adding a few words to this brief legend. The house in question was a spacious family mansion, erected by Walter Franklin somewhere about the year 1750. It stood at the junction of Pearl and Cherry Streets, facing the open triangular space called by a customary New-York license Franklin *Square*.

Names of universal philanthropy are always fitly applied to objects of public utility. Doubly appropriate is this association of Franklin's memory with a spot of ground over which fall the shadows of an edifice of gigantic proportions, of which the world can show no equal, dedicated to typographical art.

At the time of the erection of the Franklin mansion, and for a generation or two afterwards, this portion of our city, now devoted to the busy pursuits of the merchant and the artisan, was principally occupied by the residences of wealthy and fashionable citizens. The situation was unsurpassed for beauty in that day. On commanding ground, with an open square in front, and the view of the East River and the distant hills of Nassau, unobstructed by the walls of brick and the forests of

masts which now obscure the intervening space, it had all the charms of suburban scenery.

It was here that the courtesy, dignity, and grace, which marked the official and private hospitality of our first President, won the affectionate regards of all who came within its sphere.

Time and change have done their work on this hallowed spot. Where the mansion once stood now runs a broad avenue, open to the ever-rushing current of active life. Few who pass it in the eager pursuit of gain, or in the daily struggle for bread, will ever call to mind the history which lies buried beneath their feet.

There is, to many of our citizens, an interest also, in which I feel you will participate, associated with the object of this change in our city map. The new street thus opened to the heart of the southern section of the city will hereafter form a continuation of the Bowery, so long known as the spacious avenue which extended through the eastern suburbs, and terminated at Chatham Row. The origin of the name given to this avenue is not so well known as it deserves to be.

Governor Stuyvesant, whose many virtues and indomitable spirit so well illustrated the character of the old Dutch dynasty, held an estate of large dimensions, beautifully located on the shores of the East River, a few miles beyond the boundaries of the city of his day. In his fondness for this his favorite retreat, where he enjoyed relaxation from the cares of public life, he gave it the name of his "Bouerie." This name it bore during his lifetime, and for many years after his death. The country road which led from the Stuyvesant Mansion into the city came thus to be known as the "Bouerie Lane." Finally, in the progress of time, as the growing city disturbed the deep solitudes of the country, and the insatiate demands of commerce usurped the Stuyvesant domain, out of this quiet lane grew the well-known Bowery of our day, which now finds its termination at the spot where Washington, in civic glory, consummated a renown that is to live through all time.

Passing accidentally the premises to which I have thus alluded, while they were in process of demolition, it was my good fortune to rescue the material which forms the relic I now place in your charge.

If the Massachusetts Historical Society will consent to accord to this chair a place in their library, I shall regard their acquiescence as a favor to be gratefully remembered.

I am, my dear sir, ever faithfully

Your friend and cousin,

B. R. WINTHROP.

Hon. ROBERT C. WINTHROP, Boston, Mass.

*Voted*, That the thanks of the Society be presented to Mr. Winthrop for this interesting and acceptable donation, and that the Corresponding Secretary stand charged with the acknowledgment thereof.

Professor FELTON, of the First Section, exhibited a copy of Madame Piozzi's Travels, containing various annotations in her handwriting, of an entertaining and peculiar character, some of which he read.

These volumes were presented by her to her special friend, Conway the player, and are now the property of Mr. Pell, of New York.

*Voted*, That the Librarian, with Messrs. Deane and Shurtleff, be a Committee to make all necessary arrangements for the reception of the books belonging to the Library of the late Mr. Dowse, and for the disposition of the same upon the shelves prepared for them.